Oct 20, 1941

The Executive Board of the N.J. Urban League met on the above date with twenty three present and Mr. Garner in the chair.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and accepted with correction.

Treasurer's report showed:
Disbursements 762.99
Bank balance as of Oct 1, 326.21

This report was accepted for filing upon motion by Mr. Ormond.

At this time the Board took up the requested business of the meeting — a discussion as to the advisability of having an Executive participate in political or quasi-political position where there patronage is involved.

Mr. Schnidel and Mrs. Geo. Smith requested that the Board met in Executive Session.

Dr. Konvitz felt that for objective discussion the meeting should be open.

Mr. Slavitsky stated that a Board can make no blanket decision for all Executives.

Mr. Gillette had considered the matter and stated that he was willing to change the recommendation and substitute the discussion of the present Executive's participation. He also questioned the policy of having on the Board persons who maintain a dual relationship to the Executive, being both employers and employee's, citing Mrs. Weather and Mr. Parker as instances of this situation.

A second motion for Executive Session was made by Mr. Stabitsky but withdrawn when the motion was questioned by Mr. Ormond seconded by Mr. Tate "The matter to be discussed if involving any charges should be outlined by the person requesting the item on the agenda."

Dr. Parks stated that it would be a fine thing to have a committee to investigate and make recommendations to the Board. Upon Mr. Ormond's explanation that a committee would have to have something on which to report, Dr. Parks withdrew the suggestion.

Mr. Stanitsky pointed out that a survey by an impartial body - free from subjective ideas and prejudices - would be the type of thing which would cover the situation satisfactorily. He proposed that a com. be designated to make arrangements to call in an impartial body to look into the program, efficiency personnel etc.

The President explained that it had been felt that the cost of such a survey would be prohibitive. $250.00 for a superficial and $500.00 for a thorough survey.

Mr. Stanitsky replied that the League couldn't afford not to have one; that the effectiveness of the program had been questioned three or four years ago and again two years ago; that the Urban League is dependent upon the good will of the Community

and that such a survey would be the only constructive way of stopping rumors

Mr. Tate moved previous question. Dr. Konvitz seconded. Motion carried

In short discussion which followed Mr. Gillette explained that he thought the Board should discuss questions of policy arising from certain facts, not necessarily charges.

Motion by Mr. Schindel that question of the Executive's participation be disposed of

Motion by Miss Shepard that policy of allowing Executive to holding his position be endorsed. Motion carried.

Mr. Gillette then listed certain facts which might influence League policy and which were based on the Executive's conduct on the Housing Authority as it affects his duties as Staff Executive of the Urban League

1. The Executive had vacillated from one faction of the board to another

2. Had discriminated against certain candidates

3. Had urged the appointment of Miss Simkins as manager of Baxter Terrace, as a single person.

4. Had two persons on League Board occupying dual role of employer and employee. (5 over)

5. League while voting Industrial Emphasis has employed a young inexperienced man for the job

League apartment while on salary with the Housing Authority.

6. That the tone of newspaper articles indicate that the Executive has done a poor community relationships job.

Dr. Parks suggested that the entire body hear what Mr. Lett had to say, not just the com.

In the discussion which followed on the scope of the com. the chair explained that the com could only make recommendations, that final actions rest in the Board.

There was some division of opinion as to the personnel of the com. of five. some feeling that outsiders could do the better job, other feeling that these were matters that concern the Board, being the discussion of the actions of a particular professional social worker in his job not the discussion of professional social work.

Mrs. Moorfield advised that for the sake of the work there be no careless publicity be given the matter under discussion.

Dr. Konvitz felt that the com. should employ stenographic assistance for the greatest accuracy in the record of its proceedings. Mr. Stavitsky endorsed this idea.

At this time Mr. Lett's request for a few minutes was granted. Mr. Lett

began by mentioning the adverse newspaper comments and copies of certain letters which he had in his possession which indicated the motives behind the publicity. He then explained in short the incidents ~~at the time~~ before and after Miss Simkins candidacy for managership of Baxter Terrace. As a member of the Authority from its beginning Mr. Lett has named 14 Negroes to positions, some of whom were not accepted. Of the nine persons who have served on the Authority, only two have named Negroes. Mr. Lett continued by explaining the differences of opinion which existed between Mr. Gillette and himself and indicated certain persons who had inspired the newspaper publicity which points to a division in the Negro Community. Mr. Lett concluded by urging the prospective com. to consider the background.

The meeting was then adjourned without further discussion